

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A photo-ionization detector (PID) comprising:  
a microprocessor; and  
5 a gas detection unit that measures a current  
corresponding to a concentration of a volatile gas in an  
ambient gas, wherein the gas detection unit comprises:  
an ionization chamber, through which the  
ambient gas flows;  
10 a UV lamp that ionizes the ambient gas in the  
ionization chamber;  
a bias electrode that is biased to repel  
positive ions resulting from the ionization of the  
ambient gas; and  
15 a measurement electrode that is biased to  
attract positive ions resulting from the ionization  
of the ambient gas,  
wherein the microprocessor controls the gas  
detection unit such that a flow of the ambient gas in  
20 the ionization chamber is intermittently interrupted,  
wherein the UV lamp converts oxygen in the closed  
ambient gas to ozone.
2. The PID of claim 1, further comprising a container  
25 coupled to the ionization chamber, the container  
including an oxygen-containing gas, wherein the oxygen-  
containing gas is supplied into the ionization chamber  
when the flow of the ambient gas is interrupted in the  
ionization chamber, so that the oxygen-containing gas is  
30 converted to ozone.

3. The PID of claim 1, further comprising a pump  
coupled to the ionization chamber, wherein the  
microprocessor intermittently closes the flow of the  
ambient gas in the ionization chamber by turning on and  
5 off the pump.

4. The PID of claim 3, further comprising a pump  
driver circuit coupled to the pump, wherein the  
microprocessor controls the pump driver circuit.  
10

5. The PID of claim 3, wherein the pump is turned on  
and off every 0.5 second.

6. The PID of claim 1, further comprising:  
15 a lamp driver circuit that drives the UV lamp;  
a bias driver circuit that provides a first voltage  
to the bias electrode; and  
a measurement driver circuit that provides a second  
voltage to the measurement electrode,  
20 wherein the microprocessor controls the lamp driver  
circuit, the bias driver circuit, and the measurement  
driver circuit.

7. A photo-ionization detector (PID) comprising:  
25 a microprocessor; and  
a plurality of gas detection units, each of the  
plurality of gas detection units measuring a current  
corresponding to a concentration of a volatile gas in an  
ambient gas, wherein each of the plurality of the gas  
30 detection units comprises:

an ionization chamber, through which the  
ambient gas flows;

a UV lamp that ionizes the ambient gas in the ionization chamber;

a bias electrode that is biased to repel positive ions resulting from the ionization of the ambient gas; and

a measurement electrode that is biased to attract positive ions resulting from the ionization of the ambient gas,

wherein the microprocessor controls the plurality of gas detection units such that a flow of the ambient gas is prevented in the ionization chamber of at least one of the plurality of the gas detection units while the ambient gas flow through the ionization chamber of at least another one of the plurality of gas detection units is permitted, wherein the UV lamp converts oxygen in the closed ambient gas to ozone.

8. The PID of claim 7, further comprising a container coupled to the ionization chamber, the container including an oxygen-containing gas, wherein the oxygen-containing gas is supplied to the ionization chamber in which a flow of the ambient gas is prevented, so that the oxygen-containing gas is converted to ozone.

9. The PID of claim 7, further comprising a pump coupled to each of the plurality of gas detection units, the pump moving the ambient gas through the ionization chamber of the plurality of gas detection units.

10. The PID of claim 9, further comprising a pump driver circuit coupled to the pump, wherein the microprocessor controls the pump driver circuit.

11. The PID of claim 9, further comprising a multi-port  
valve coupled to the ionization chamber of each of the  
plurality of gas detection units, wherein the multi-port  
5 valve opens and closes the ionization chamber of each of  
the plurality of the gas detection units to the flow of  
the ambient gas.

12. The PID of claim 11, further comprising a valve  
10 driver circuit coupled to the multi-port valve, wherein  
the microprocessor controls the multi-port valve driver  
circuit.

13. The PID of claim 11, wherein the pump operates  
15 continuously.

14. The PID of claim 7, wherein the flow of ambient gas  
is permitted in the ionization chamber of one of the gas  
detection units from which contamination has been  
20 removed during a time when ambient gas is prevented from  
flowing in the ionization chamber of another of the gas  
detection units to permit cleaning the ionization  
chamber of the another.

25 15. The PID of claim 7, wherein each of the gas  
detection units has associated therewith  
a lamp driver circuit that drives the UV lamp of  
the gas detection unit;  
a bias driver circuit that provides a first voltage  
30 to the bias electrode of the gas detection unit; and

a measurement driver circuit that provides a second voltage to the measurement electrode of the gas detection unit,

wherein the microprocessor controls the lamp driver  
5 circuits, the bias driver circuits, and the measurement driver circuits.

16. A photo-ionization detector (PID) comprising:  
a microprocessor;

10 a first gas detection unit; and

a second gas detection unit, each of the first and second gas detection units measuring a current corresponding to a concentration of a volatile gas in an ambient gas, wherein each of the first and second the  
15 gas detection units comprises:

an ionization chamber, through which the ambient gas flows;

a UV lamp that ionizes the ambient gas in the ionization chamber;

20 a bias electrode that is biased to repel positive ions resulting from the ionization of the ambient gas; and

a measurement electrode that is biased to attract positive ions resulting from the ionization  
25 of the ambient gas,

wherein the microprocessor controls the first and second gas detection units such that the ambient gas flows through the ionization chamber of one of the first and second gas detection units and the flow of the  
30 ambient gas is prevented in the ionization chamber of the other of the first and second gas detection units,

wherein the UV lamp converts oxygen in the other of the first and second gas detection units to ozone.

17. The PID of claim 16, further comprising a container  
5 coupled to the ionization chamber of the first and second gas detection units, the container including an oxygen-containing gas, wherein the oxygen-containing gas supplied to the ionization chamber in which ambient gas flow is prevented, so that the oxygen-containing gas is  
10 converted to ozone.

18. The PID of claim 16, further comprising a pump  
coupled to the first and second gas detection units, the pump providing the ambient gas flow through the  
15 ionization chambers of the gas detection units.

19. The PID of claim 18, further comprising a pump  
driver circuit coupled to the pump, wherein the microprocessor controls the pump driver circuit.  
20

20. The PID of claim 16, further comprising a three-way  
valve coupled to the ionization chamber of each of the first and second gas detection units, wherein the three-way valve permits ambient gas flow in the ionization  
25 chamber of one or the other of the first and second gas detection units.

21. The PID of claim 20, further comprising a valve  
driver circuit coupled to the three-way valve, wherein  
30 the microprocessor controls the valve driver circuit to control the three-way valve.

22. The PID of claim 20, wherein the pump is connected to the three-way valve and operates continuously.

23. The PID of claim 16, wherein the flow of ambient  
5 gas is permitted in the ionization chamber of one of the first and second gas detection units from which contamination has been removed during a time when ambient gas is prevented from flowing in the ionization chamber of the other of the first and second gas  
10 detection units to permit cleaning the ionization chamber of the other.

24. The PID of claim 16, wherein each of the first and second gas detection units has associated therewith  
15 a lamp driver circuit that drives the UV lamp of the gas detection unit;  
a bias driver circuit that provides a first voltage to the bias electrode of the gas detection unit; and  
a measurement driver circuit that provides a second  
20 voltage to the measurement electrode of the gas detection unit,  
wherein the microprocessor controls the lamp driver circuits, the bias driver circuits, and the measurement driver circuits.

25  
25. A method of real-time self-cleaning and measuring of a volatile gas concentration with a photo-ionization detector (PID) that comprises a gas detection unit including an ionization chamber in which an ambient gas  
30 including a volatile gas is ionized by a UV lamp, the method comprising:

causing ambient gas to flow through the ionization chamber, to permit the PID to measure the volatile gas concentration; and

causing the flow of the ambient gas through the  
5 ionization chamber and periodically interrupting the flow, wherein the flow is on for a first period of time and off for a second period of time, and further wherein during the second period of time the UV lamp converts oxygen contained in the ambient gas to ozone to remove  
10 contamination in the ionization chamber.

26. The method of claim 25, further comprising supplying an oxygen-containing gas into the ionization chamber.

15 27. The method of claim 25, wherein the first and second periods of time are each one-half second.

28. The method of claim 25, wherein the interruption of  
20 the flow of the ambient gas is achieved by turning on and off a pump connected to the ionization chamber.

29. A method of real-time self-cleaning and measuring of a volatile gas concentration with a photo-ionization  
25 detector (PID) that comprises a plurality of gas detection units, each of the plurality of gas detection units including an ionization chamber, in which an ambient gas including a volatile gas is ionized by a UV lamp, the method comprising:

30 flowing the ambient gas through the ionization chamber of one of the plurality of gas detection units



so that the PID measures the volatile gas concentration;  
and

stopping the flow of the ambient gas in the  
ionization chamber of another of the plurality of gas  
5 detection units so that the UV lamp converts oxygen  
contained in the ambient gas in the ionization chamber  
of the another gas detection unit to ozone, which  
removes contamination in the ionization chamber with the  
closed ambient gas,

10 wherein each of the plurality of gas detection  
units is repeatedly switched between flowing and  
stopping the ambient gas.

30. The method of claim 29, further comprising  
15 supplying an oxygen-containing gas into the ionization  
chamber in which the flow of ambient gas is stopped.

31. The method of claim 29, wherein the switch between  
the flowing and stopping of the flow of ambient gas is  
20 achieved by using a multi-port valve connected between a  
pump and the ionization chamber of each of the plurality  
of gas detection units.

32. A method of real-time self-cleaning and measuring  
25 of a volatile gas concentration with a photo-ionization  
detector (PID) that comprises a first gas detection unit  
and a second gas detection unit, each of the first and  
second gas detection units including an ionization  
chamber, in which an ambient gas including a volatile  
30 gas is ionized by a UV lamp, the method comprising:

flowing the ambient gas through the ionization chamber of the first gas detection unit, so that the PID measures the volatile gas concentration; and

stopping the ambient gas through the ionization chamber of the second gas detection unit so that the ambient gas is closed in the ionization chamber of the second gas detection unit while the ambient gas flows through the ionization chamber of the first gas detection unit, wherein the UV lamp converts oxygen contained in the ambient gas in the ionization chamber of the second gas detection unit to ozone, which removes contamination in the ionization chamber of the second gas detection unit,

wherein the flowing and stopping the ambient gas are repeatedly switched between the first and second gas detection units.

33. The method of claim 32, further comprising supplying an oxygen-containing gas into the ionization chamber in which the flow of ambient gas is stopped.

34. The method of claim 32, wherein the switch between the flowing and stopping of the flow of ambient gas is achieved by using a three-way valve connected between a pump and the ionization chamber of each of the first and second gas detection units.